

Steps for Landowners who are Interested in Hazardous Fuels Reduction Assistance

1. Application

An application must be submitted to notify us of your interest and property information. You may request one by calling (406) 388-3213 or online at www.gallatinextsion.com. Submit completed application to the MSU Extension Office, 201 W. Madison, Ste. 300, Belgrade, MT 59714.

2. Property Visit

Once your application has been received our field tech will contact you to set up a property visit. At this initial visit we will walk your property to get an idea of what types of fuels reduction can be done around your home. We will also visit with you about the program, your ideas of what you would like to see happen, and how you would like to do the work, whether you want to hire a contractor or do the work yourself.

3. Prescription Treatment

After our field tech has visited your property they will be sending you a prescription of the recommended treatment that is to be done on your property to create a defensible space around your home.

At this time we will also be letting you know whether you are eligible for grant funding.

4. Receiving Bids From Contractors / Doing the Work Yourself

After you have been notified that funding is available you should begin by starting to contact contractors from the list provided and talk to them about getting a bid for the work that needs to be done. If you are doing the work yourself contact the field tech to discuss this option in more detail. You will need to work closely with the field tech to make sure work is completed according to the grant specifications. You will also need to make sure that you understand what expenses can be counted toward your in-kind cost share allowance.

5. Submit Contractors Bids to MSU Extension

When you have chosen a contractor and received their bid for your property please mail, email, or fax it to the MSU Extension Office.

6. Agreement

After the field tech has received your bid from the contractor of your choice they will put together an agreement between the Northern Rocky Mt. Resource Conservation and Development (NRMRC&D) and you. The NRMRC&D works in coordination with MSU Extension to provide this program to landowners. Thoroughly read through all the information you received to ensure you understand all aspects of the program. With the agreement you will also receive two tax forms that need to be signed and returned with the agreement. If you have any questions at this time please feel free to contact your field tech to go over any information with you.

7. Landowner/Contractor Agreement

It is now up to you to work with your contractor and set up an agreement and date for the work to be done. It is recommended that you have an agreement with your contractor that spells out the payment procedures and any specifications you want to include in your contract/agreement with them. Keep the field tech involved in this process.

8. Work Begins

At this time your field tech will do periodic inspections throughout the life of the project to ensure the work is getting accomplished and that the contractor is not thinning too many trees but is thinning enough trees to ensure the reduction of the fire risk on your property and is meeting the grant specifications.

9. Remember that the purpose of this program is to:

- a. Leave the best trees on your property
- b. To reduce the chances of a running crown fire through the tops of the trees
- c. To reduce the chances of a ground fire becoming a crown fire by reducing the ladder fuels leading up into the tree crowns
- d. To improve the health and vigor of your forest to be able to withstand insect and disease infestation
- e. It is also important for you to know that this program is **NOT designed to “fireproof” you property**, but only to reduce the fire risk. If a fire occurs in and around your property and the burning conditions are extreme, there is a possibility that you could still have a devastating fire because of those extreme burning conditions. This program will definitely reduce the chance of this but cannot guarantee the risk of this type of fire will be totally eliminated.

10. Final Inspection

Once the contractor or you have completed the job, let the field tech know so they can come out and check off the work that has been done. Not until after the work is checked off should you pay your contractor.

11. Submit All Invoices

If the work passes final inspection, you will need to submit all invoices, bills, receipts, expenses, etc. to the MSU Extension Office.

12. Payment

Once all costs are approved, we will send you a check for 50% of the approved costs up to the maximum amount as outlined in the agreement. If your expenses for accomplishing the work are over the maximum amount in the agreement with Extension, we will pay you up to, but not over, the maximum amount on the agreement (expect up to 1 month for check to come in the mail).

We want to thank you for being a part of this important program. The work that you accomplish on your property will assist local wildland fire protection agencies in better protecting you and your neighbors from wildland fire.